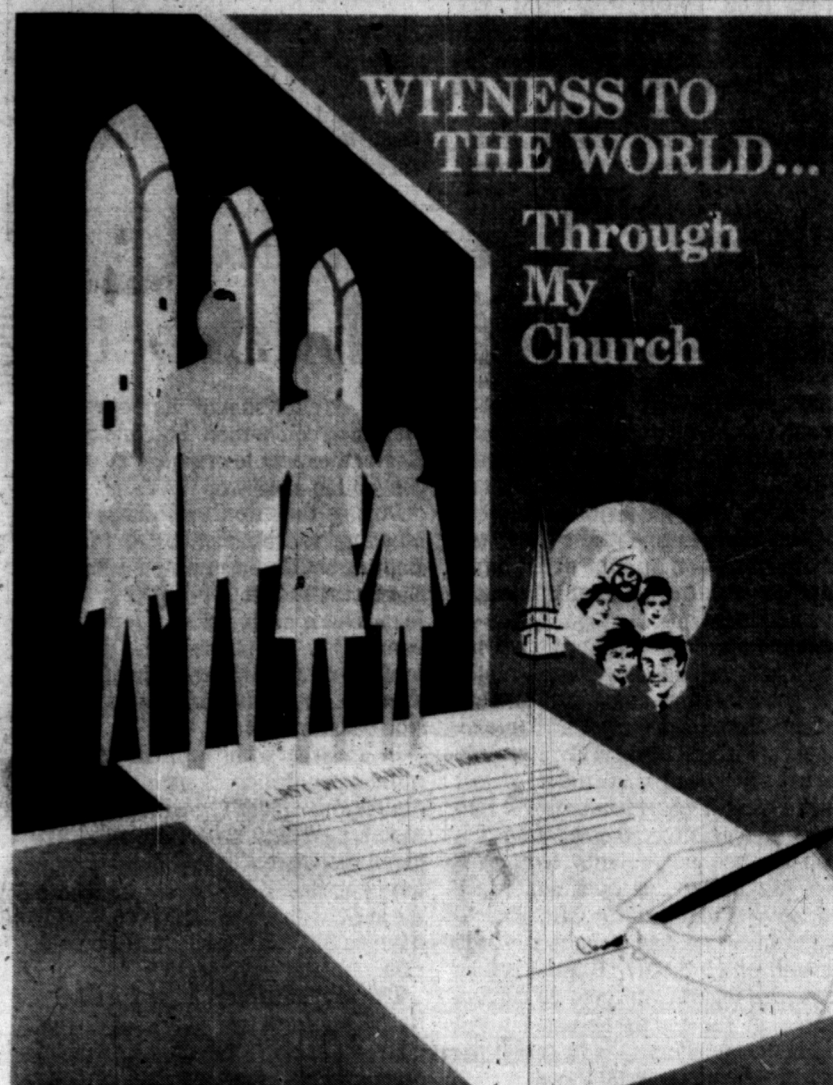


# Witness Commitment Day-Sunday



MAKE YOUR WILL MONTH

## King David prepared abundantly for his death

By Bill R. Baker, pastor First, Clinton and vice president  
Mississippi Baptist Foundation  
board of trustees  
I Chronicles 22:5

Usually when one hears any statement referring to preparation before death, the first impression centers on such words as funeral, salvation, heaven, forgiveness, everlasting life, etc.

David prepared abundantly before his death but he was preparing for something that would be done on the earth and for the glory of God. Have you ever entertained the idea that you could do something on the earth and for the glory of God after your death?

David said, "Solomon my son is young and tender, and the house that is to be built for the Lord must be exceeding magnificent, of fame and of glory throughout all countries: I will therefore make preparation for it." Even though the building was not erected until after David's death, he "prepared abundantly before his death."

What do you intend to do on the earth and for the glory of God after your death? Whatever it is, you must make preparation. Now if you are asking how this can be done, here is the answer. The Baptist Foundation exists

for this very purpose. As a result of placing the Foundation in your will, you can prepare to honor God on the earth following your departure from it.

Mrs. Beth Tillery, an active and faithful member of Clinton's First Baptist Church, recently departed this life to enter her heavenly home. Prior to her death Beth dreamed of having a part in foreign missions here on the

(Continued on page 3)

## "Creation" bill passes Senate

A law requiring the teaching of scientific creationism in public schools if evolution is taught is in effect in at least two of Mississippi's neighboring states, Louisiana and Arkansas. It has been challenged in Arkansas.

Such a bill was introduced before the Mississippi Legislature with the beginning of this session on Tuesday. Senator Emerson Stringer of Columbia introduced the legislation on the first day of the new session requiring the teaching of scientific creationism in Mississippi's public schools when evolution is taught.

The bill, Senate Bill 2256, passed the Senate on Tuesday by a vote of 48-4.

## Alexander replaces Carlisle as Mississippi Partners coordinator

Mark Alexander, missionary on furlough from Argentina, on Jan. 4 became the coordinator for the Mississippi Partners with the Rio de la Plata, the partnership effort between Mississippi Baptists and the Baptists of Paraguay, Uruguay, and Argentina.

He replaces Jason Carlisle, missionary to Uruguay, who will be returning to the field.

Alexander is the executive secretary of the Mary Sierras Association and lives while on the field in the city of Mar del Plata. This is 250 miles southeast of Buenos Aires. It is a sea resort city on the Atlantic coast.

Mar del Plata has two churches, and Alexander has been pastor of both. The association has six churches and four mission points.

Alexander is from Norfolk, Va., and his wife, Cecile, is from Corinth, Miss.

They have been missionaries to Argentina for 24 years. Before they began serving in Mar del Plata 18 years ago they had been in Parana for 6 years.

While they are in Mississippi the Alexanders will live in the missionary residence of the Van Winkle Baptist Church in Jackson.

Carlisle will return to Florida, Uruguay, where he is pastor of the Baptist church. He and his wife were there three years before their present furlough began. They had spent a year in Costa Rica in language school before that.

Carlisle was the son of missionary parents and grew up in Montevideo. Mrs. Carlisle is from Jackson.

On Jan. 2 James F. Yates, pastor of the First Baptist Church of Yazoo City and president of the Mississippi Baptist

## Mississippians participate

# Baptists organize health care system

Baptist Memorial Health Care System, Inc., an organization for the growing range of health services provided by Southern Baptists in Arkansas, Mississippi and Tennessee, was formally organized at Baptist Memorial Hospital, Memphis, with the adoption of bylaws and election of officers, Joseph H. Powell, president, announced.

The new organizational structure, consisting of the three units of Baptist Memorial Hospital and other corporate entities, will become operational when legal details are completed, Powell said. Offices are at 899 Madison, Memphis.

The organization is needed to provide the Baptist health care system the

flexibility necessary to give optimum health care in the 1980s and beyond, Powell said.

"This action will assist in preserving the economic viability of Baptist Memorial Hospital and enable the institution to fulfill its program goals."

Trustees named Powell president and chief executive officer of the corporation. He also will continue as president of Baptist Hospital.

Hospital trustees will become trustees of the new corporation, William A. Crabill of Marks, Mississippi will serve as chairman of the trustees; W. Fred Kendall, II of Union City, Tennessee, first vice chairman; J. B. Strickling of Osceola, Arkansas, second vice chairman; and F. Irvin Hays

of Bartlett, Tennessee, secretary.

The Baptist Conventions of Arkansas, Mississippi and Tennessee, owners of the health care system, passed resolutions earlier this year to establish the new entity.

Each convention names nine members to the institution's 27-member board. In turn, the trustees choose three of their group from each state to function as an executive committee.

The charter of the new corporation was filed December 3 with the Tennessee Secretary of State in Nashville.

Like Baptist Memorial Hospital, the new corporation will operate exclusively for charitable, religious, educational and scientific purposes and

serve as the primary organization through which the three state Baptist conventions carry out the tradition and on-going health care missions of affiliated Southern Baptist churches.

Baptist Memorial Hospital is the largest non-profit health care institution in the United States with 2,068 beds at the Medical Center, East Unit and the Rehabilitation Center, with annual admissions of more than 60,000.

Since June, 1980, Baptist has leased a 65-bed hospital in Ripley, Tenn., and a 40-bed hospital in Corning, Arkansas, purchased a 70-bed hospital in Covington, Tenn. and has taken an option to lease a 136-bed hospital in Booneville, Miss., and a 40-bed hospital at Hardy, Ark.

# The Baptist Record

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# Evangelism-Bible meeting will be at FBC, Vicksburg

Six Southern Baptist preachers and Bible teachers will headline the 1982 sessions of the Mississippi Baptist Evangelism-Bible Conference, Feb. 1-3 at First Baptist Church, Vicksburg.

This annual preaching and doctrinal study meeting features 12 sermons by the following preachers: Harper Shannon, Jess Moody, Ray Robbins, Malcolm Tolbert, James Draper, Jr., and Bill Hogue.

Shannon is pastor of Huffman Road Baptist Church, Birmingham, Ala. Moody is pastor of First Baptist Church, Van Nuys, Calif. Robbins is on the faculty of Mississippi College and Tolbert is a faculty member at Southeastern Seminary. Draper is pastor of First Baptist Church, Euless, Tex. And Hogue, former director of evangelism for the Southern Baptist Home Mission Board, has recently become pastor of Eastside Baptist Church, Tulsa.

The program begins Monday evening, Feb. 1, at 6:30 p.m. and will conclude at lunchtime on Wednesday. The Tuesday afternoon session will adjourn at 4:20 p.m. to allow participants to go out for visitation and witnessing to their faith in Jesus Christ.

Another special feature of the conference will be individual sessions of

which the participants may choose two concerning Baptist doctrines including studies on evangelism, the Bible, creation, the Holy Spirit, the atonement, election, Jesus Christ, and the Church.

Themes of the various conference sessions will be "Sin: the Tragedy of Humanity," "Love: the Nature of God," "Salvation: Our Only Hope," "Witnessing: By All Means to Save Some," and "Equipping the Church for Evangelistic Ministry."

The program is sponsored by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

## Churches meet

# Food shipments to Poland allowed in, say spokesmen

By John Wilkes  
ZURICH, Switzerland (BP)—Although the declaration of martial law in Poland imposed Dec. 12 closed that country's borders, a Polish spokesman has assured European Baptists that food in any quantity will be allowed into the country.

A spokesman for the Polish embassy in Bern, Switzerland, said in a Dec. 15 telephone interview that any food parcels, in whatever quantity, even truckloads, will be allowed into the country with only customs verifications necessary.

"These would be really welcome in the present situation," the embassy representative said.

Knud Wumpelmann, general secretary of the European Baptist Federation, said he is confident the latest relief shipment, a truckload of medicine worth more than \$39,000 but purchased for about \$13,000, already had reached its destination at Blalystok, where Polish Baptists operate a home for elderly people, before borders were closed.

In all, Baptists have sent six truckloads, most foodstuffs, to Poland. The European Baptist Federation and the German Baptist Union have spent \$260,870 for those shipments. The figure includes \$135,000 in hunger and relief funds from the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board.

Another truck was being readied for dispatch Dec. 18. Manfred Otto, ad-

ministrative director for the German Baptist Union, said he will try to arrange for still another shipment to be made up immediately in light of reports of growing food shortages in Poland.

In a telephone conversation with Wumpelmann Dec. 11, Michal Stankiewicz, general secretary of the Polish Baptist Union, requested five tons of paper for Baptist publications. One ton, which was immediately available, will be shipped as soon as other priority traffic resumes, Wumpelmann said.

It is generally assumed that Polish Baptist churches held their services on Dec. 13 even though direct contact could not be established due to the communications blackout.

The 69-item declaration of martial law, which prohibited public gatherings, apparently did not apply to church worship services.

Polish embassy personnel, when asked specifically about church meetings, confirmed they were not banned. (Wilkes is director of European Baptist News Service.)

# Baptists give million dollars a month in 1981

For the first time in history Mississippi Baptists have averaged more than \$1 million per month in missions gifts through the Cooperative Program.

Earl Kelly, executive secretary-treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, has announced that the Cooperative Program total for 1981 from Mississippi Baptist churches amounted to \$12,536,549. That is \$1,026,089 more than the total was for 1980, which is an increase of 8.9 percent.

December of 1981 was also a record-breaking month for Cooperative Program gifts in Mississippi. The December total was \$1,326,332, which is to be compared with the previous record set in September of 1981 when the total was \$1,236,857. The December gifts were \$167,225 more than those for the same month of 1980. This was an increase for the month of 14.4 percent.

The record-breaking month in December helped the missions gifts to rebound from a \$390,000 budget deficit

that was experienced at the end of November. While the total for the year did not quite match the budget projection, the shortage was only \$118,451 by the end of the year. The 1981 budget was \$12,655,000.

"Such a strong finish for the year in Cooperative Program gifts is surely a cause for rejoicing," Kelly noted. "It indicates that Mississippi Baptists continue to place a very high priority on missions endeavors in our state, across this nation, and around the world."

"The financial needs are increasing in the endeavor to provide a Christian witness to everyone in the world by the end of this century," he noted.

"That is the reason that the 1982 Cooperative Program budget is \$13,920,500. This certainly presents a challenge; but based on our 1981 experience, our 1982 missions gifts will be a worthwhile expression of the missions consciousness of Mississippi Baptists," he said.



Jason Carlisle and Mark Alexander discuss the Rio de la Plata project that is involving Mississippi Baptists in volunteer service in Argentina, Uruguay, and Paraguay.



## Conclusion

## Was Jesus born in 12 B.C.?

By Jerry Vardaman, director,  
Cobb Institute of Archaeology,  
Mississippi State University,  
and interim pastor, Harrisburg,  
Tupelo

A chronological difficulty presents itself in Josephus here, for he says that Gratus ruled for "11 years," whereas if Gratus changed the priesthood year by year and appointed a total of 4 priests, one would have expected Gratus to have ruled as procurator only 4 years and for his term to have ended in A.D. 18, thus:

A.D. 15 = year 1  
A.D. 16 = year 2  
A.D. 17 = year 3  
A.D. 18 = year 4

It is possible that a scribe suffered confusion in Josephus' text in the following way. Josephus could have said that Gratus ruled "ETA," which means "4 years," and this could have been confused easily by some later scribe to mean "11 years" (= EIA). Thus, one finds a similar problem encountered above in the case of the "15th year" of Tiberius:

E I A = "11 years"

E T A = "4 years"

We take pains to write out these two figures as they could have appeared in the Greek original so that the reader can see again how little difference there could be between the two numbers. Again, it was just as difficult for an ancient scribe to distinguish between these two numbers as then written as it is for the modern reader to do so. One cannot know at this point in time how to understand Josephus' remarks and what could have happened in the transmission of his text; enough is clear to show that Caiaphas was on the scene in Judea by A.D. 18 and could have served any time after that as high priest.

Missionary activity in China by Christians between A.D. 25-28:

Years ago a perceptive student of church history found some evidence from early Chinese records that must also be considered in this connection. He found that Chinese records testify to Christian missionary activity in that country between A.D. 25-28. Obviously, the early Christians took seriously Jesus' commandment that they should carry the Gospel to the uttermost parts of the earth (Acts 1:8 ff.; Matthew 28:20).

These early missionaries in China suffered persecution and death even at that primitive period. The writer points out that there was a perfectly good trade highway which ran from Syria-Palestine, and the west, to the area of China, and that it was well known and regularly traveled by ancient peoples. Such an early date for Christian missionaries in China is not possible for one who dates the death of Jesus after A.D. 30, but it could be sufficiently explained if the date suggested here is accurate for the time of Jesus' birth.

Luke describes the treasurer of Candace of Ethiopia who was converted by Philip (Acts 8:26-39).

Recent research indicates that these queens in Africa carried on trade as widespread as Gaul on the one hand, and India on the other, when one of the palaces of one of these Candace queens relating to the New Testament period was recently brought to light. By the same token, it is highly likely that Christianity was carried to China immediately after the death of Jesus, and Stewart is right. A Jew from Parthia converted at Pentecost could have become the link in this activity (Acts 2:9).

## The Christmas Star

"... we have seen his star in its eastern rising." Matthew 2:2.

It is likely that Halley's comet, which made a particularly close approach to the earth in 12 B.C., was the Christmas star of Matthew's Gospel. It arose in the east and became visible to the human eye ca. August 26, 12 B.C. and stayed visible until October 21, 12 B.C. From the time of its appearance, it gradually intensified in brightness. After September 9 or 10, it was no longer to be seen in the eastern sky at dawn, but was detectable only in the western horizon at the time when twilight settled (see chart). Its movement was almost imperceptible when it first appeared. Between the period of September 6-13 its rapid movement across the sky intensified.

Many modern interpreters view this heavenly manifestation as purely fanciful or "theological" rather than actual. These interpreters feel that "Matthew" simply utilized some Old Testament passages which mentioned a star arising out of Israel (Numbers 24:17) for his own purposes to show that Jesus was the Messiah, whether or not such an event actually occurred at the time of Jesus' birth (see Brown, *Birth of Messiah*, pp. 195 ff., as a typical exponent of this view).

The view that the star which appeared at the time of Jesus' birth was a comet is not new. As early as Origen (*Against Celsus* 1.58, 59) this opinion was accepted: "The star which was seen... (was) of the nature of those celestial bodies which appear at times, such as comets, or those meteors which resemble beams of wood, or beards, or wine jars, or any of those other names by which the Greeks are accustomed to describe their varying appearances... on the occurrence of great events... such stars are wont to appear..." (for convenience, see Roberts and Donaldson, *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Vol. IV, p. 422). In the period under consideration, there were only 2 certain comets which were manifest in the time between 12-4 B.C. One comet (Halley's) was manifest in 12 B.C.; the Chinese briefly record one in 10 B.C., but speak of it as a "Po" comet, which means that it did not have a tail; even if comets occurred in 5/4 B.C., such manifestations were simply too late to be identified with the stellar phenomena of the wise men which Matthew describes.

If Halley's Comet was the Christmas star, it is significant to note that this same comet reappeared for 71 days in A.D. 66, just before the beginning of the 1st revolt, which resulted in the destruction of Jerusalem: "So it was when a star, resembling a sword, stood over the city, even a comet which continued for a year" (Josephus, *War*, VI.5.3.289). Any part of a year was counted as a year by the ancients. Comets were interpreted by the ancients as both good omens (they looked like sceptres, etc.) and as evil omens (they resembled swords). Is Halley's Comet the sign of the Son of Man which Jesus predicted those of his generation would see in that time period (Luke 21:25-27)? It is possible. In any case, it is to reappear again in 1986.

## Halley's Comet and its passby of earth in 12 B.C.

This drawing (made by Robert Fritzius) is based on the ephemeris computation by D. K. Yeomans of the Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, California. It is easier understood if one visualizes himself in an automobile passing down the road. When objects are closer to the automobile, they seem to be moving faster. As Halley's Comet approached earth, its movement seemed to be the most rapid (esp. between September 6-13).

Naturally, the comet appeared at its brightest then, since it was so close to earth. This drawing helps one to understand why the comet was only seen in the east (until September 9/10) and after that time was seen only in the west. The "tail" of the comet is caused by sunlight pushing upon the comet's dust particles, thus the tail points away from the sun.

The time of the census mentioned when Jesus' death drew near "Master, is it lawful to pay the census tax unto Caesar...?" (See Matthew 22:17; Mark 12:14; Luke 20:22).

In the first century the Romans conducted periodic census efforts throughout their domains. It is known, at least for Egypt, when these times of census occurred. For example, the year A.D. 5-6 was a census year; the same was true for A.D. 20-21; records are preserved from such years, as well as for the year A.D. 62-63 (see for convenience G. A. Barton, *Archaeology and the Bible*, 1941, pp. 553-558).

The word which the King James translators render as "tribute" is better translated as census tax (Gk. = *kensos*). The question raised by Jesus' enemies seemed to be a burning issue of the day. It makes perfect sense to see the issue which they raised as current, which it would be if the time for such a census (in A.D. 20/21), had rolled around again. The next such census would not come until A.D. 34, since these censuses occurred every 14 years. It makes more sense to relate the question of Jesus' enemies to the census of A.D. 20-21.

It should be noted that in the first century B.C. there is some reason to date the census intervals 17 years apart, but 14 years apart if in the first century A.D. Thus, 12 B.C. fits perfectly for the birth year of Jesus, being within the appropriate census cycle then current.

Interestingly, this specific coin which was shown to Jesus is well known. It was a denarius of Tiberius, showing his portrait on the obverse, and on the reverse, Pax is shown on a throne, holding a branch. Each one of these "tribute pennies," as they are called, which this writer has examined by the method of micrographics, dates to A.D. 19 (= "year 6" of Tiberius). This fact itself fits very nicely with the known census cycles, and indicates that A.D. 20/21 was the most likely date for the death of Jesus, since His death synchronized with a census cycle, just as His birth did. Tiberius only struck 3 types of denarii and this one is most likely to be the type coin Jesus handled and discussed.

## The time of Pontius Pilate's service as Procurator of Judea

Most students of the Bible date the time of Pilate's removal from his office of Procurator of Judea around A.D. 36 or 37, since Whiston's edition of Josephus says that before Pilate got to Rome when he was dismissed by Vitellius, Tiberius had died (Josephus, *Antt.* XVIII.4.2.89). The strange thing about this matter is that Josephus then recounts a number of actions that Tiberius carried out, and speaks to him as though Tiberius were still living and, indeed, died later:

- 1) Tiberius establishes friendship with the Parthians (*Antt.* XVIII.4.4.96)
- 2) Herod Antipas writes to Tiberius (*Antt.* XVIII.4.5.104)
- 3) Tiberius annexes Philip's land to Syria (*Antt.* XVIII.4.6.108) = A.D. 34
- 4) Tiberius orders Vitellius to make war on Aretas (*Antt.* XVIII.5.1.115)
- 5) Tiberius' death is reported (*Antt.* XVIII.5.3.124) with no confusion about the fact that he was definitely dead. Tiberius died in A.D. 37.

By this author's interpretation, Pilate was sent to Rome before Tiberius moved to the Island of Capri. Instead of translating Josephus' word, *metastas*, as "died," as Whiston did, it makes perfect sense to translate it as *moved*. This would mean that Pilate was fired from his office as procurator of Judea around A.D. 26, since for the last 10 years of his life Tiberius lived on the Isle of Capri, and it was quite rare for him ever to set foot on the mainland of Italy after that move on his part. If indeed Pilate were fired by A.D. 26 from having power in Judea, then the crucifixion of Jesus had to take place before that time. Far too long we have followed blindly Eusebius' chronology for our understanding of the time that Pilate served in office. Eusebius is approximately 10 years too late on this matter.

For many years, scholars have known of the *Acta Pilati* which seem to date the crucifixion of Jesus to A.D. 21 (see Robert Eisler, *The Messiah Jesus and John the Baptist*, pp. 16 ff.). This date has much to commend it; at least, A.D. 21 is approximately correct. Notice one final event in the New Testament which shows that Jesus died well before A.D. 30, the approximate time when most modern students of the Bible place his crucifixion.

## The time of Paul's conversion

"Then 14 years after, I went up again to Jerusalem..." (Galatians 2:1)

One of the keenest problems in New Testament study concerns Pauline chronology. Many students of the New Testament who have been influenced by the distinguished scholar, John Knox, who wrote *Chapters in a Life of Paul*, are denying that Paul made as many trips to Jerusalem as he is represented as making in the Book of Acts. The author has not been able to accept Knox's reconstruction on this matter, nor those newer attempts by various students who have been influenced by Knox. Both Paul's letters and Acts are in conflict with Knox. The conflict between Acts and Paul's letters is simply imaginary in Knox's mind.

Acts is quite credible as a witness to the early history of the New Testament events. Luke wrote not only the Gospel which bears his name, but also this valuable source of Acts, which details the later history of the Apostles. To date the time of Paul's conversion, one must combine the information found in Paul's letters (especially the Book of Galatians), and the information found in the Book of Acts. And the information of Acts is stronger than Knox's inferences.

Note the facts about Paul's conversion as found in the Book of Acts and Galatians, especially as far as the time of that conversion is concerned:

- 1) The Book of Acts informs us that Paul, after a long absence from Jerusalem, made a trip to Jerusalem apparently some while before the death of King Agrippa I, who died late in A.D. 44 or early in A.D. 45 (Acts 11:30). To us, this trip was the journey mentioned in Galatians 2:1, in which he strongly says it had been 14 years—since he had been in Jerusalem. It seems reasonable to date this journey of Paul to Jerusalem no later than ca. A.D. 43/44. But Paul's other journeys to Jerusalem coincide with sabbatical years (2nd = A.D. 48; 3rd = A.D. 54). If Paul's journey at this time were in connection with a sabbatical year (when the "poor" especially needed help) the trip at this time dated A.D. 41. Cf. Gal. 2:10—"remember poor."
- 2) Paul says that it had been 14 years since he had visited Jerusalem, making his last visit there when he abode with Peter for 15 days no later than ca. A.D. 29/30; this visit, no later than ca. A.D. 29/30, is to be identified with his visit mentioned in Acts 9:26-30; Acts 22:17-21; Acts 26:20, and Galatians 1:18-20. As seen in the preceding point 1 above, it is possible that one must reckon back 14 years from A.D. 41, making Paul's visit with Peter date to A.D. 27 (a sabbatical year)
- 3) Before Paul went up to Jerusalem following his conversion, he had ministered in Damascus and adjacent regions for 3 years (Galatians 1:18). We are driven back, therefore, to a time no later than ca. A.D. 26/27, for Paul's conversion; possibly, Paul was converted as early as A.D. 24/25 (points 1 and 2 above). For those interpreters who fix Jesus' death after A.D. 30 (such as Knox), there is no way that they can fit Paul's conversion into their scheme before that time. For students who are willing to take the statements and the evidence of the New Testament itself as serious history, no problem is encountered in placing Paul's conversion so early. This is another reason, however, why the "15th year" of Tiberius (Luke 3:1) has to be reinvestigated and dealt with seriously. If Jesus died ca. A.D. 20/21, Paul's conversion chronology is easily acceptable and harmonizes beautifully with the Gospel chronology, as well.

## Missionaries on furlough

Missionaries now on furlough in Mississippi are:

Jason and Susan Carlisle, Uruguay, 4233 Carter Circle, Jackson 39209; Bill and Carolyn Smith, Brazil, 3331 Old Canton Road, Jackson 39216; Edd and Freda Trott, Brazil, Pine Trail, Apt. M-5, Springridge Road, Clinton 39056; Robert and Nan Sugg, Taiwan, N. Colony Copperfield Ct. No. 61, 420 Beasley Road, Jackson 39206; R. T. and Frances Buckley, Bangladesh, Rt. 2, Box 105-C, Picayune 39466; Donald

and Barbara Anne Phlegar, Thailand, 1625 Easy St., Yazoo City 39194; Stanley and Glenna Stamps, Nicaragua, 715 E. Northside Drive, Jackson 39206; Cornelia Leavell, Hong Kong, 208 S. Washington St., Starkville 39759.

Roger and Beverly Swann, Tanzania, 416 Ford Ave., Columbia 39429; Antonina Canzoneri, 5939 Clinton Boulevard, Jackson 39209; and Mary Dann Stampey, Ghana, 919 Reaves, Jackson 39209.

## Evangelism thread in Northeast blanket

STROUDSBURG, Pa. (BP)—Evangelism is the common chord which can bring five Southern Baptist bodies in the northeastern United States together for a massive Bold Mission Thrust project in 1982-85, according to participants at an area planning meeting in Pennsylvania's Pocono Mountains.

Almost 100 Southern Baptists from the Northeast including pastors, laity and associational and state leaders gathered in Stroudsburg, Pa., to plan a cooperative Bold Mission Evangelistic Thrust to "reach multitudes of lost people, revive church members, and strengthen existing congregations." Conference participants, led by Albert McClellan, retired associate executive director of the SBC Executive Committee, also sought methods through which the five Baptist bodies can work together to give 60 million people in the northeastern United States the opportunity to hear and accept the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Southern Baptist bodies in the Northeast include the Baptist Convention of Maryland (Maryland and Delaware), organized in 1836; District of Columbia Baptist Convention (Washington, D.C.) organized in 1877; Baptist Convention of New York, organized in 1969; Pennsylvania-South Jersey Baptist Convention, organized in 1970; and the Baptist General Association of New England (Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Ver-

mont), a fellowship affiliated with the Maryland convention. Baptists in New England expect to organize as a state convention in 1984 or 1985.

During the two-day Pennsylvania meeting, representatives of the five Baptist bodies formulated plans for Northeast Thrust, a Bold Mission project which calls for a cooperative evangelism emphasis. One possible project is simultaneous evangelistic events to be conducted throughout the Northeast in 1984.

In an area with approximately 60 million population, Southern Baptists claim only 136,979 resident church members. This 0.2 percent of the total population meets in 601 Southern Baptist churches. Sixty-seven counties in the area, with a population of 5,338,700, have no SBC-affiliated church or mission.

The proposed Northeast Thrust had its beginnings two years ago when convention executive directors met to discuss ways the five groups could work together. Evangelism directors from the area then helped formulate a concerted effort to reach across state convention borders in a dramatic display of cooperation to evangelize 60 million people.

The Pennsylvania meeting was called to continue the planning process and allow input from Southern Baptist leaders in the area. Information gathered will be compiled into a single document for further planning of Northeast Thrust projects.

## Funeral of policeman turns into testimony

ROSEAU, Dominica—The shooting death of a young Christian policeman became an opportunity for Christian witness to heads of state and an entire police force in troubled Dominica.

Still recovering from the devastation of Hurricane David two years ago, the island nation—only 29 miles long and 14 miles wide—has been plagued by unrest and terrorism in more recent days.

The 20-year-old policeman, Patrick Lugal, a member of Deliverance Baptist Church, Roseau, Dominica, had been assigned to a special unit responsible for combating such terrorism.

Southern Baptist missionary La Homa Singleton remembers being awakened by the telephone at 11 p.m. and hearing the voice of Patrick's sister, Joy: "They've killed Patrick! Can you come?"

Mrs. Singleton and her husband, Jonathan, a native of Belzoni, Miss., dressed and left immediately. He went to the hospital and waited with the parents and older brothers for Patrick's

body to be brought in. Mrs. Singleton went to the Lugal home to be with the sister and younger brothers.

Police reported that three terrorists had set a trap, ambushed Patrick and shot him in the head at close range.

"Later that night, as we gathered with the family in their home, all were in shock," Singleton recalled. "But as we prayed together and ministered to the grief and pain, there was a recurring theme that brought comfort. Patrick knew Jesus as his Lord and Savior."

On the day of the funeral, the whole police force, the prime minister, other heads of state and hundreds of friends were present.

"The service was a testimony that in Christ there is victory over death," Singleton said. "His brothers and sister sang two songs during the service and urged all present to trust Jesus as their brother, Patrick, had done."

"Tragedy turned into testimony and loss proclaimed victory in Christ," the missionary observed.



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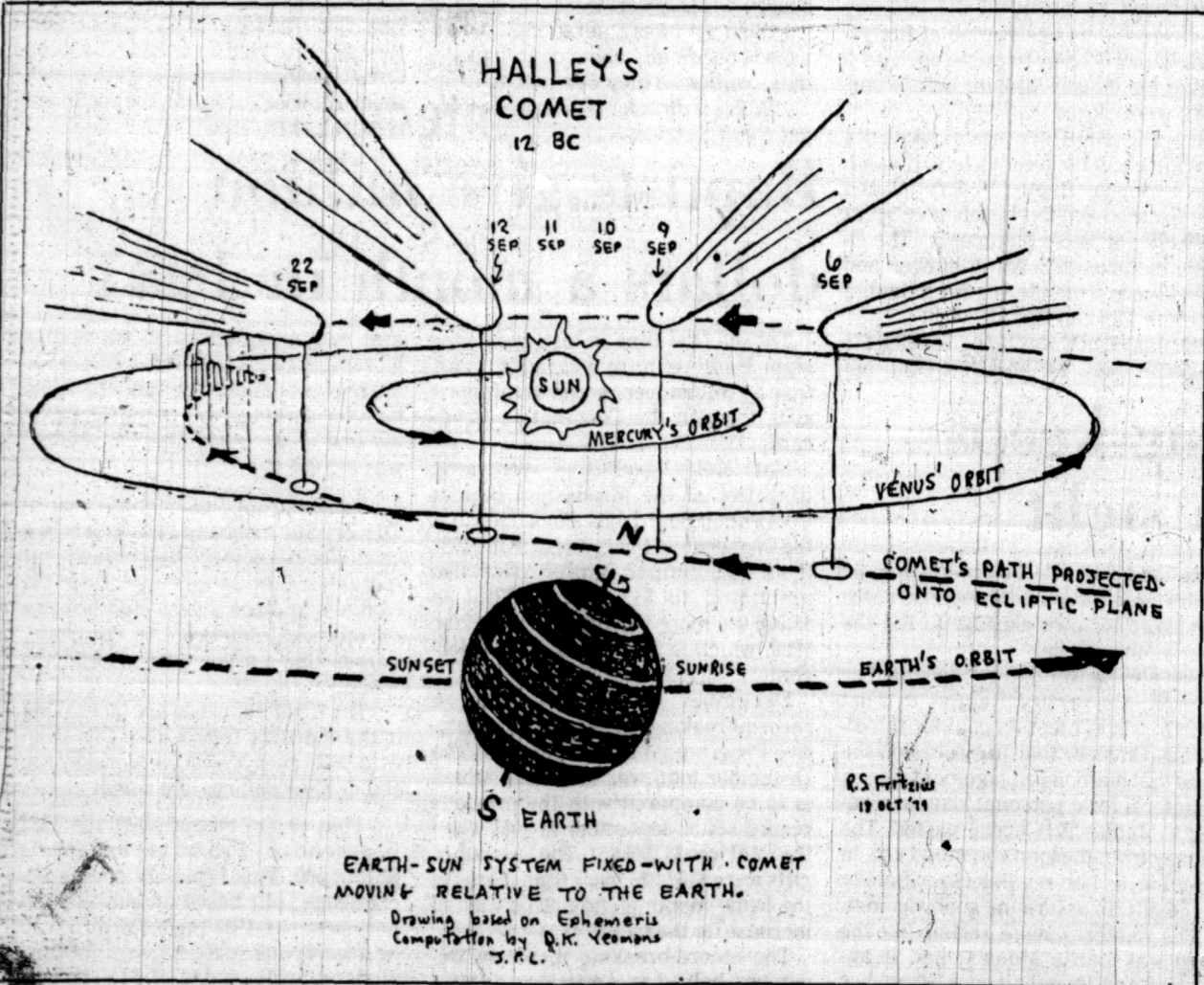
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# Bronx Shepherds cite need for Baptist volunteer help

By Jim Newton  
ATLANTA (BP)—The Bronx Shepherds, an interdenominational organization of religious leaders in the Bronx section of New York, have issued a plea for continued Southern Baptist help in rebuilding the burned-out and abandoned apartments in an area that looks like a war zone.

During the past year, five work teams from Southern Baptist churches helped the Shepherds rebuild and refurbish 135 apartments in five buildings in the Bronx. The apartments will eventually be sold to tenants for \$250 each.

Sam Simpson, pastor of the Bronx Baptist Church, and one of the key leaders in the Shepherds, pointed out, "We are not in the housing business—we are in the people busi-

ness." Simpson said the work teams are involved in "sweat evangelism," demonstrating their concern for the people and sharing the good news of the gospel while they work alongside Bronx residents. Members of Bronx churches are asked to "tithe" five work days a year to work with team members from Southern Baptist churches.

Harvey Durham, executive director of the Bronx Shepherds Corp., said the combination of work teams and "tithed labor" from Bronx churches enables the Shepherds to renovate an apartment for less than \$12,000, compared to the \$50,000 cost of current market rate, since labor costs comprise about 75 percent of renovation expenses.

Jack Roach, a certified public ac-

countant from Cleveland, Tenn., and member of two such work teams, told the group, "We went to the Bronx not to reclaim buildings, but to reclaim lives."

Although the teams went with some apprehension and experienced great shock at the physical deterioration of the buildings, there was no fear while they were there, said Roach, a member of Cleveland's Westwood Baptist Church. Highly skilled construction workers were not needed on the teams, "because you can't hurt the buildings," Roach said.

Roach told about witnessing to six people during his experience in the Bronx, including a black man named Jose who accepted Christ. Roach said Jose told him he'd never heard anyone talk about God like him.

(Newton is HMB news editor.)

## Kenya to host conference

WASHINGTON—Baptist men from nearly 100 countries will be meeting in Nairobi, Kenya, July 16-21, 1982. They will attend the 3rd World Conference of Baptist Men, an event that takes place every five years. The two previous conferences were held in Hong Kong and Indianapolis, USA.

The theme will be, "For the Healing of the Person." Lectures, Bible studies, workshops and exciting international fellowship are part of the rich program. In two evangelistic open-air rallies the gospel will be presented to the people of Nairobi. Harold C. Carter, pastor of New Shiloh Baptist Church, Baltimore, MD, will be the guest evangelist.

Safari tours, either before or after the conference, will enhance the fellowship. A small group of Baptist leaders will travel from Kenya to Liberia where a similar conference is planned in Monrovia, mainly for Baptist men from the northwestern part of Africa.

## Journeyman applications due Jan. 15

RICHMOND, Va.—The application deadline for the 1982-84 term of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board's missionary journeyman program is Jan. 15. Applications must be postmarked by that date.

The missionary journeyman program is designed for Southern Baptist college graduates interested in using their skills on overseas mission fields for two years.

Applicants must be age 26 or under, single or married without children, U.S. citizens, and qualified for specific mission tasks.

Write or call Everett Burnette or Judy Brummett, Personnel Selection Department, Foreign Mission Board, SBC, P.O. Box 6767, Richmond, Va. 23230. Telephone: (804) 353-0151.

## Alexanders . . .

(Continued from page 1)  
using a video tape orientation prepared for Mississippi by the Foreign Mission Board.

Ray Henry, pastor of Society Hill Baptist Church, will be the construction coordinator; and David Michel, pastor of Prentiss Baptist Church, will be the evangelism coordinator.

Mrs. Alexander will work with Marjean Patterson, executive secretary of the Mississippi Woman's Missionary Union, and Alexander in prayer partnerships. The Alexanders have a son, Mark Steven, who will graduate from Southwestern Seminary in Fort Worth in May.

## David prepared

(Continued from page 1)  
earth that would continue after her death. In order to do this preparation had to be made. According to their dreams and plans, her husband has now placed a sum of money with the Foundation in her name and memory. The return from this preparation will be given each year through her church to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for Foreign Missions.

After your departure from this life you could serve God on this earth by building buildings, sending missionaries, educating young people in college and seminary, providing child care, healing the sick, and—the list is unending. However, you must, like David, make preparation for it.

During "Make Your Will Month" you would be a wise and faithful steward by deciding what you would like to do on the earth and for the glory of God after your death, and preparing abundantly for it.

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## Med Center trustees elect officers

Mississippi Baptist Medical Center's board of trustees 1982 officers are, from left to right, Paul Moak, chairman of the executive committee; Bill Causey, vice-president; Zach Hederman, president; and Alvis Hunt, secretary. Moak has been a board member 11 years; Causey, 16 years; Hederman, 31 years; and Hunt, 3 years. The 15-member board and its officers are elected by the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

## Members of Congress honor Brooks Hays

WASHINGTON (BP)—When Brooks Hays died in October, the nation lost one of its living treasures.

At least that's the way Rep. Carl Perkins, D-Ky., expressed it during a special order on the House floor arranged by Rep. Ed Bethune, R-Ark., to pay tribute to the former Arkansas congressman and Baptist statesman.

More than 25 House members joined in recalling the numerous attributes as well as stories told by and about Hays, who died Oct. 12.

The congressmen praised Hays for his wit and story-telling reputation, for his moderating influence in the often-stormy world of politics, and for his refusal to compromise his faith or his

principles in politics or life. Hays, who served as president of the Southern Baptist Convention in 1958 and 1959, was widely acknowledged for his moderating stance during the 1957 Little Rock, Ark., integration crisis—a stance which most observers say cost him a ninth term in the House.

"But clinging to his Christian ideals of peace and moderation and by his refusal to play the demagogue, Brooks Hays quietly assured his political defeat in those poisonous years in the later 1950s, when bigotry and intolerance stalked the land," said Perkins, one of only 20 current members of the House who served with Hays.

## Man convicted, sentenced in slaying of Jean Buice

ATLANTA (BP)—Anthony Wiley, 22, has been convicted of the Sept. 21 beating death of Jean Buice, but was spared the death sentence when a DeKalb County jury deadlocked 11-1 in favor of imposing the maximum punishment.

Wiley was sentenced to six consecutive life terms in prison, plus 45 years, by Judge Clarence Peeler. The sentences were the maximum the judge could give. In Georgia, only a jury can impose the death penalty.

Wiley was the first of three men to be tried in connection with the Decatur city park assault on Buice, daughter-in-law of Atlanta pastor Lester Buice, and her co-worker, Betty Ann Miles.

Wiley, maintaining his innocence

throughout the trial, was implicated in the attack by testimony from his cousins, Rodney and Lapas Favors. The Favors brothers also were arrested and charged with the slaying of Buice and the beating of Miles. The women, both employees of Decatur Federal Savings and Loan, were assaulted while eating lunch in Glen Lake Park.

Wiley claimed he had been job-hunting with two friends on the day the two women were attacked. Both men denied being with Wiley on Sept. 21.

Buice, an active member of Rebooth Baptist Church, where her father-in-law has been pastor for 34 years, died from blows to the chest sustained in the noon-time attack.

## House 'church' loses high court tax appeal

WASHINGTON (BP)—Individuals hoping to avoid property taxes by declaring their houses as places of worship received a legal setback as the U.S. Supreme Court refused to hear the appeal of a Minnesota couple who tried the ploy.

Douglas and Carolyn Page, of Eden Prairie, Minn., applied for property tax exemption in 1978 on their single family dwelling after Page was "ordained" as a minister in the Basic Bible Church of America. The church's head, Pope Jerome Daly, a disbarred attorney convicted of selling marijuana, also inducted Page into his "Order of Almighty God."

After the Hennepin County tax assessor denied the application for the exemption, the Pages took him to court. But after a trial, the Minnesota Tax Court upheld the ruling, a decision later affirmed by the state supreme court.

The Pages' attorney asked the nation's high court to review the case, arguing that his clients' free exercise of religion had been denied.

But attorneys for Hennepin County countered that "there is no constitutional right to have one's home granted a real estate tax exemption simply because one worships in it."

## Recreation Mini-Lab: Hattiesburg

The Church Recreation Mini Lab is an annual event in February each year. The Mini Lab provides intensive training for church recreation volunteers in one of five areas: sports and games; arts and crafts; retreats and camps; social recreation; and physical fitness.

On February 26-27, First Baptist, Hattiesburg, will be the location for

the Mini Lab '82. The program will begin at 7 p.m. with a general introduction to church recreation. Recreation committees are encouraged to attend with one or more persons attending each area.

Puppetry and drama, an important aspect of church recreation, will be offered at the same time, but in a separate conference at a separate location as the Mini Lab '82.

The following is a reproduction of a commitment card that Mississippi Baptists will be given an opportunity to sign in their churches next Sunday, which is Witness Commitment Day:

MY WITNESS COMMITMENT

With the Holy Spirit as my guide, I shall pray for and make an effort to share Christ with the following people this year:

(Put these names in the fly leaf of your Bible as your permanent prayer list.)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Department \_\_\_\_\_

☐ I would be interested in a witness training class in the near future.

## Editors learn of surprise postage jump

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—After fighting and apparently winning a continued subsidy for second-class non-profit mailers this summer, Baptist editors learned in late December the subsidy will end Jan. 10.

The immediate effect for Baptist state newspapers and similar mailers is an increase in postage costs of at least 100 percent and up to 150 percent, depending on volume and weight of the newspaper.

In meeting President Reagan's demand for an additional across-the-board reduction in domestic spending, Congress slashed nearly \$4 billion from the 1982 budget when it passed a stop-gap funding bill in mid-December to keep the government running through March 31. The bill provided \$82 million less funding for the subsidy which provides preferential rates for non-profit, second-class mailers than was authorized by Congress when it set federal spending ceilings during the first round of budget cuts last summer.

Had Congress appropriated the full \$696 million authorized for this postal subsidy, second-class non-profit mailers would have continued to move gradually toward paying their full mailing costs. Last June, they reached step 10 of a 16-year phasing process started by Congress in 1970.

But as directed by the stop-gap funding bill, the postal service adjusted all preferred-rate categories, except second-class within-county and fourth-class library rates, to step 16, or full-phased rates, effective Jan. 10. Second-class in-county and fourth-class library will be adjusted to step 13.

Newspapers whose primary income is from subscriptions can more easily rebound from such a blow. Others, funded completely through state Cooperative Program contributions, must wait a year before they can make a budget adjustment or ask for an emergency allocation from reserve funds.

Particularly galling to the Baptist state newspapers is the fact that regular second-class mailers, those who deliver a product for profit through the mails, will pay less per piece than non-profit mailers.

## Guy Culver dies of brain tumor

Guy Culver, director of missions for Alcorn and Tishomingo County Baptists, died Dec. 31 of a brain tumor at North Mississippi Medical Center in Tupelo.

John Causey, pastor of Corinth First Baptist Church and Foy Rogers, director of the Mississippi Baptist Cooperative Missions department, preached the funeral. Burial was at Lee Memorial Park in Verona.

Culver served as director of missions for Union County Association and had been pastor of Northside Baptist Church, New Albany; Abbeville Church, Lafayette Association; and Tishomingo Chapel, Alcorn Association.

He was a graduate of Blue Mountain College.

Mrs. Culver is the former Dorothy Jean Sheffield, a native of Marietta, Miss., as was Culver.

Besides Mrs. Culver, he is survived by two grown daughters, Marsha and Sandra Culver; his mother, Mrs. Jimmie Lynn Grammer of Marietta; three sisters and three step-brothers.

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## Board seeks to contact Ghana missionaries

ACCRA, Ghana (BP)—Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board leaders are trying to contact missionaries in Accra, Ghana, in the wake of a military coup in that capital city early Dec. 31.

The American Embassy in Accra reported the estimated 1,500 Americans in the country were believed safe and were being urged to stay in their homes. Heavy gunfire was reported at the airport and in the area of Burma Barracks, the central military camp at Accra, news reports said.

Thirty-one of the 51 Southern Baptist missionaries stationed in Ghana were in the west African country when the coup was staged before dawn. Two couples and two single missionaries are stationed in Accra.

Jerry J. Rawlings, 34-year-old former flight lieutenant, staged the overthrow of the civilian government led by elected president Hilla Limann, the reports said. Rawlings staged a similar coup two years ago, overthrowing the government of Lt. Gen. Frederick Akuffo, then turned over leadership of the nation to Limann after a public election.

The only missionaries with Mississippi currently in Ghana are Ralph and Joyce Merritt Davis. They were in Tamale where they work at the Baptist Training Center.

He is a native of Pachuta and she of Hattiesburg.

## Dan West is home recuperating

Dan West, manager of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's Central Hills Baptist Retreat, Kosciusko, is at his home now at the retreat and recovering from injuries suffered Nov. 25 in an automobile accident.

Paul Harrell of the Brotherhood Department which operates the retreat, said Dan will have some more facial bone surgery but is in good spirits and resting well. The rest of the family has recovered from the accident which injured Dan's wife Rachel and daughter Shannon.

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## Editorials . . .

A new year stretches out before us with all of its bright and shining promise and with all of its danger and foreboding.

Always at this time of year we concentrate on the promise and determine that we will do better in the days that stretch ahead than we have been able to do with those that we have experienced in the immediate past. Yet we are always aware that the unknown can hold the threat of danger just as well as it can hold the bright and shining promise for which we are hoping.

## The new year goal

As we search for the means with which to cope with uncertain times, the only conclusion to be drawn is that the key has to be found in faith. All of us, no matter of what religious persuasion or of no religious persuasion, cannot live without faith. We must place our faith somewhere or we are dead inside if not physically.

The Christian knows wherein his faith rests. And the Christian rests secure in his faith. The Lord of the universe controls the days and the nights, the stars and the sun, and the future of mankind. He is able to direct the paths

of each of us in whatever way they should go in order to glorify his name. And whatever that way is the way it should be. Bringing honor and glory to the name of the Lord is the aim of the Christian, and the Christian who has found his way of doing that has found his avenue of life and his realm of service.

Thus, as we face a new year, we must be aware that for the year to be one during which we may feel we have lived and served successfully we must place our complete faith in the leadership of the Lord and we must follow

that leadership explicitly.

The Lord doesn't promise that all of our ways will be bright as we dwell on this earth. But he does promise that he will lead us. There will be times when we must go through shadows; and for some of us, some of those shadows may come during the year that we are entering. Yet the Lord will lead us through the shadows just as he leads us through the bright and shining days.

So for 1982 the goal of life has not changed at all from all of the years that have gone before. It is to discover the will of the Lord and follow it.

## A Supreme Court error

Generally the decisions of the United States Supreme Court regarding prayer and/or religious gatherings on public school property, including the campuses of tax-supported colleges and universities, have appeared to be reasonable. Perhaps the criterion for reasonableness is the fact that one agrees with the decision; but nevertheless, they have appeared to make sense.

In 1962 the Court ruled against state or administration-structured prayers or prayers being the result of orders of the state or the school administration. That was fine. We felt that the state and the administration were not capable of telling our children when they had to pray or how to go about it.

Then not long ago the University of Missouri was taken to court because the university had refused to allow re-

ligious meetings on the campus. It did allow other types of meetings not sponsored by the university, but not religious meetings. When this case reached the Supreme Court, the Court ruled against the university. This was fine, too. The act of making a meeting place accessible when it would not conflict with school functions should not constitute the establishment of a religion. To deny the use of a meeting place under the stated condition, however, would seem to constitute the prohibition of a free exercise of religion, the freedom of speech, and the right of peaceable assembly.

A week after that decision, however, the Court seemed to reverse itself. It refused to hear a case from New York State brought by a group of students who want to have a prayer meeting on school grounds each day before clas-

ses begin. The students petitioned the school board for permission and were denied. They took the matter to court and lost. They appealed to the Supreme Court and were refused.

So the nation's highest court has ruled that it is all right to have prayer meetings during free periods on tax-supported college campuses but not on public school property. The Court seemed to part with reason at that point.

In a footnote on the University of Missouri decision, Justice Lewis F. Powell Jr. said, according to news reports, that college students are young adults who are "less impressionable than (younger) students and should be able to appreciate that the university's policy is one of neutrality toward religion."

With all due respect to the Supreme

Court, that explanation and its decision regarding the New York high school do not seem to hold water. The establishment of a religion or the denial of the free exercise of religion has nothing to do with the age of those involved. It is a fact or it is not a fact that religion was being denied before the decision on the University of Missouri case and that it has been denied by the school board in the case of the New York high school.

This publication has indicated repeatedly that there should be no restriction of students gathering voluntarily on public school property during free times for meetings of religious significance.

It would seem that the Supreme Court has erred on what should have been a simple decision.

## Letters To The Editor

## New missionary address

Editor: Thank you for sharing with Mississippi Baptists about my recent surgery. The prayer support received from across the state was most encouraging. God has seen fit to answer those prayers in a positive way since I am well on the way to recovery.

My wife and I moved from Guadalajara to Mexico City Dec. 11 where I assumed teaching responsibilities at the Baptist Theological Seminary on Jan. 5.

Our new address is Apartado 267, Cd. Satellite, Edo. de Mexico, 53100-Mexico.

Mark P. Jones  
Missionary to Mexico

## Pulpit committee ethics

Editor: A few words need to be said about the common practices of many pulpit committees. From personal experi-

ences and those of many colleagues, many committees appear to be unethical and inconsiderate. I do not believe that this is intentional, but is due to lack of understanding of what needs to be done. Here are some things committees need to consider.

It is unethical to contact and/or interview a prospective pastor and then he never hears from the committee again. If a professional person applies for a position with a secular firm, he will at least receive a letter telling him whether or not he is being considered for the job. Should not a minister be able to expect equal treatment from a church? Most ministers appreciate an honest "no" far more than being left wondering.

Integrity should be considered. A committee should be good on their word. If you say, "We will call," then do so. Many committees do not do this, and it has been disappointing to see Christian people give their word lightly and not try to keep it. All dealings between Christians should be transparently open and straightfor-

ward. If a committee tells a minister they are going to consider only one person at the time, then do so. If you want to consider more than one, tell him. There is nothing spiritual about being secretive in such an important matter as calling a pastor or other staff member. The New Testament calls us all to be persons of highest integrity; surely this applies to dealings between pulpit committees and prospective pastors. This word also applies to ministers dealing unfairly with committees.

If lack of information is the problem, the Church-Minister Relations Dept. of our state convention is highly recommended. Dr. Perkins has outlined a procedure that, if followed, treats all parties involved fairly.

This letter is not motivated by "sour grapes" but by concern for the kind of Christianity we practice in all the doings of God's church. Pulpit committees and ministers alike would do well to take counsel from Jesus in how they relate to one another. "In everything,

do to others what you would have them do to you. . . ." (Mt. 7:12).

Name withheld  
by editor

## Appreciation for series

Editor: I congratulate you for running the excellent series entitled "Was Christ Born in 12 B.C.?" by Dr. Jerry Vardaman. I have enjoyed the first two articles and anxiously await the rest. Whether or not Dr. Vardaman's theory is correct, it is refreshing to see a scholar approach this question from a presupposition that the biblical account is the correct one. We can all be proud of the Cobb Institute of Archeology at Mississippi State University. As an Ole Miss man, I can assure you that my compliments of State are sparing.

Please, let's have more articles by Dr. Vardaman in the future. How about reviewing his books in print?

Carl D. Ford  
Laurel

## Foreign Board reappoints 'old' couple to Kenya

By Erich Bridges  
RICHMOND, Va. (BP) — When Charles and LaVerne Tope resigned as Southern Baptist foreign missionaries in 1974 after 14 hectic years in Eastern Africa, they looked forward to a long, quiet pastoral ministry in the United States before retirement.

But the Lord, Tope says, had other plans. "So we 'old folks' are going back," he says. In December the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board reappointed the Topes for mission service in Kenya.

Tope, now 55, became pastor of Northwest Baptist Church in Oklahoma City, Okla., shortly after the couple returned from Kenya in 1974. For the previous decade and a half (except for a year when he was pastor of First Baptist Church, Biloxi, Miss.), the two Missouri natives evangelized, started churches and trained Baptist leaders in Tanzania, Uganda and Kenya.

"At the time we came home, we definitely felt we wouldn't be going back," Tope says. "And from a human

standpoint, I honestly feel that we could happily and very comfortably spend the rest of our ministry at Northwest."

The Topes enjoy close personal bonds with many at Northwest church (where membership nears 3,000), and they've led the congregation to play a leading role among Oklahoma churches in supporting home and foreign missions. They also treasure time spent with their three children and two grandchildren.

So why are they returning to Africa? "The Lord has spoken to us plainly through his word and his spirit," Tope explains. "This is what he wants us to do with the last years of our ministry. And I think we have another 10 years in us."

This time Tope expects to work as a church development advisor in and around Nakuru, Kenya, about 100 miles west of Nairobi. He hopes to start new churches, strengthen existing congregations, and develop leaders, with emphasis on the latter. (Bridges writes for the FMB.)

## Meeks asks for permanent leave

ANCHORAGE, Alaska (BP)—Allen H. Meeks, executive director of the Alaska Baptist Convention, has requested a permanent medical leave of absence "upon strong advice" of his cardiologist.

In making his request, Meeks asked that he be relieved of all duties as executive of the convention until medical retirement becomes effective.

Meeks, 63, was hospitalized in Portland, Ore., during a recent Baptist Sunday School Board meeting, after he suffered chest pains. His condition was diagnosed as "reoccurring angina," and his physician recommended immediate retirement.

Meeks, who came to Alaska in 1960 to help establish Sunset Hills Baptist Church, was unanimously elected executive director in the 1980 annual meeting of the ABC.

He and his wife, Ruth, will continue to live in Anchorage.



Charles and LaVerne Tope

## Book Reviews

MASTER STUDY BIBLE, New American Standard Bible; Holman Bible Publishers, Nashville, Tenn.; 2,384 pages plus eight maps.

Holman Bible Publishers, the Bible publishing arm of the Sunday School Board, has released its Master Study Bible, a 2,384-page volume of scripture, study helps, concordance, and commentary. The first 1,309 pages are the scriptures. Before each book is to be found a brief explanation containing an outline, a survey of the book, and a statement about the authorship. The biblical text constitutes Part I of the volume.

Part II is a section titled "The Life and Teachings of Jesus." This section has 203 pages; and its five subsections are The Gospels Paralleled, Teachings of Jesus Arranged by Subjects, Discourses of our Lord, Parables of our Lord, and Miracles of our Lord.

Section III is the "Chronology of the Bible" in six pages in table form. The listings are The Time of the Patriarchs, The Time of the Judges, The Time of the Kings, The Captivity to the End of the Old Testament, and The Jewish Calendar.

Section IV is "Bible Prophecy." In eight pages are General Predictions, Messianic Prophecies of the Old Testament, and Predictions Made by

Jesus. Scripture references accompany each one.

Section V, titled "Reading and Studying the Bible," has 55 pages. The subjects are The Land and the People of the Bible, The Languages of the Bible, The Early Manuscripts of the Bible, The Archaeology of the Bible, A Thematic Approach to Bible Study, How to Study the Bible, and How to Read the Bible Through.

The "Encyclopedia to the Master Study Bible" is Part VI and takes in 661 pages.

The "Concordance to the New American Standard Bible" is Section VII, and it covers 95 pages. The section has a listing of the most important words of the text. Earlier this year Holman released the "New American Standard Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible," which has 400,000 words from the New American Standard text. This exhaustive concordance was reviewed in the July 16 issue of the Baptist Record and sells for \$34.95. Prices for the Master Study Bible vary according to binding.

Section VIII is the "Bible Maps with Index." There is a five-page index and eight maps. They are Relief Map of the Holy Land; The Exodus and the Conquest of Canaan; The Twelve Tribes of Canaan; The Kingdoms of Israel and

For All The New Year Through

BELL THAT CAN BLESS AMERICA

"EXALT HIM IN THE CONGREGATION OF THE PEOPLE" PSA. 107:32

Places

## Christmas eve in Bethlehem

December 24, 1981, at 3 o'clock in the afternoon I was standing in the lobby of the National Palace Hotel in Jerusalem. For the first time I had left my family at Christmas time. I was wishing they could be there with me to spend Christmas eve in Bethlehem.

With 77 others from eight states, I was waiting for Tom Larrimore to return from the office of the minister of tourism where he was to leave with Miriam Ben-Shalom the schedule for our evening's musical presentation at Manger Square, and a gift and letter of greeting from Gov. William Winter. Tom, of Jackson, and John Adkerson, of Atlanta, were our tour leaders.

No one could enter Bethlehem that day without special permission. Our 4 p.m. bus into the city was stopped at three checkpoints. At the first, four female rifle-carrying soldiers searched our purses and our persons for hidden hardware. "Shoot your camera once," one said. I aimed it and "shot" her. (I guess she knew I didn't have a gun in it, for she didn't bat an eye.) In the steep streets soldiers and policemen stood shoulder to shoulder or sat in parked jeeps or stood along the flat rooftops with guns and telescopes. I was glad they were intent on protecting tourists, but sad that such must be the case in the birthplace of the Prince of Peace.

Al-Andalus Restaurant on the square served lentil soup, peas, and carrots, potatoes, roast beef, fresh bananas, and a marvelous bread which formed a pouch for the green salad.

When we gathered in an upstairs assembly room, Bethlehem's Mayor Elias Freij welcomed us. Standing by a tall Christmas tree, Tom presented to him a letter from Jackson's mayor, Dale Danks, and the book, Jackson A Special Kind of Place by Carol Brinson. Then we struggled, single file, back across the jam-packed square, squinting under the blinding floodlights, each of us clinging to the elbow or coattail just ahead. Bright streamers reached up high to a neon star. Bells were silhouetted in tall church towers.

Cameras and purses and extra coats we stacked on a restaurant table for George (the guide) to watch. As we stood in line outside for an hour waiting our turn to sing, the frigid wind sent Ruth Richardson and me scurrying back for our topcoats. Never had I realized that Bethlehem is perched so high on a bleak mountain. Yet there it was, its donkey paths leading down the stony sheer slopes to fields where Ruth once gleaned and David played.

I guess you'd say a miracle took place that night in Bethlehem, for I sang with a choir! I who cannot carry a tune. But when I stood at the top of that platform, looking at faces from many lands down there in the square and as

far down all the streets as I could see, and realized that NBC and ABC and Israeli television cameras were present, I thought, "What better time will I ever have to tell the whole world at once the Good News that right here in this place nearly 2,000 years ago the Miracle of the Ages took place?" A thrill of joy plunged to the bottom of my being, and while Tom Larrimore led "Victory in Jesus" and "The King is Coming . . . Again," I could not keep my mouth shut! Irene Martin of Forest played the piano and George Rawlin of Atlanta played the trumpet. Four soloists sang: Dorothy Millner, Atlanta, "What Grace Is This?"; Kim Wickes of West Memphis (she's the blind Korean girl you've heard on Billy Graham crusades), "Ring the Bells"; Myrna Loy Hedgepeth, Jackson, "I Walked Today Where Jesus Walked"; and Rebecca Nunez, Bristol, Va., "Jesus Loves Me."

We did not hear the Aramaic, Arabic, or French services or stay for the Latin Pontifical High Mass, but instead went to a service at First Baptist Church of Bethlehem from 10:30 until midnight. That two-year-old church deserves the separate story I plan to tell later. There we sang carols and drank strawberry punch. In the church the night before we had heard black-eyed Arab children sing "Silent Night, Holy Night." Until last year most of them had never heard the story of Jesus.

I stood in the door of the church and looked up at the stars. Myrna Loy and Kim and Becky were singing "O Holy Night" and out there in the hills shepherds still were watching their sheep.

The words of A. Pitcher, the retired Salvation Army commissioner traveling with us, come back to me now: "God's plan for Bethlehem was written long before the angels sang to the shepherds. Rachel died here after the birth of Benjamin. She had called the baby 'son of my sorrow.' Jacob called him 'son of my right hand.'" Just so, Jesus claimed those two titles.

"Think of all the sorrow of the world," he continued. "Does anybody care? Jesus is 'the son of our sorrow.' He is the answer to the sins of the world. He sits forever on the right hand of the Father. He picks up our stumbling language and imparts to the Father the agonies of our souls. He is my intercessor to the Father, and the interpreter of the Father's love to me."

In the cold nights on these hills, he reminded us, many a shepherd has searched for lost sheep. "I will never wake up in a vacuum alone, for He has promised, 'Go . . . and lo, I am with you.' Every time you seek one of His lambs that is lost, the Spirit of God seeks with you."

—AWM

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# Just for the Record

BAPTIST RECORD PAGE 5  
Thursday, January 7, 1982



Hillcrest Baptist Church, New Albany, ordained Don Hulse to the gospel ministry on Oct. 11. Hulse and his wife Valery live in Bradford, Penn., where he is pastor of Bolivar Drive Baptist Church. Those who took part in the service included: l to r: James L. Travis, professor of Bible at Blue Mountain and interim pastor at Hillcrest; C. Wayne Neal, pastor of Camp Creek, Guntown; Hulse; Michael J. Burczynski, pastor of Tate Avenue Church, Corinth; and Frank Madden, chairman of deacons at Hillcrest. Hulse, son of Mr. and Mrs. Glen Hulse, Sr. of New Albany, is a graduate of Southeastern Bible College, Birmingham, Ala., and Southwestern Seminary, Fort Worth, Tex.



Pontotoc County Baptist "M" Night was held Nov. 16, at West Heights Church, with a record attendance of 692. The churches were divided into two groups based on the Church Training enrollment, and queens were selected from the two churches with the highest percentage of enrollment present. A. B. Godfrey is the associational Church Training director.

"M" Night Queen for Group I (enrollment under 75 in Church Training) is MRS. BIRDIE BOATNER, Immanuel Baptist Church, with Church Training Director Roger Gentry (left) and pastor, Tony Norris.



"M" Night Queen for Group II (enrollment over 75 in Church Training) is SUSAN FOSTER, Algoma Baptist Church, with the pastor, Kenny Adams.

Mike Davis, has been named director of marketing and J. Michael Hatley has been named editor of Brotherhood materials in two staff changes announced recently by the Brotherhood Commission.

Davis, an 11-year Commission employee, replaces Jack Childs in the marketing position. Childs became director of support services, filling a vacancy left when Roy Jennings resigned to become director of communications at Baptist Memorial Hospital in Memphis.

## Missionary child dies in Singapore

SINGAPORE (BP)—Marilyn Morris, 13-year-old daughter of Southern Baptist missionaries Buddy and May Morris, died Dec. 15 in Singapore of accidental asphyxiation.

The Morriszes, Oklahoma natives, said they went to check on Marilyn when they realized she was taking too long for her evening bath. They found her sitting in the bathroom, not breathing. She had turned on the wall-mounted gas water heater and apparently busied herself with other things while waiting for the water to get hot. Apparently, inadequate ventilation caused her to become sleepy and to be asphyxiated.

Appointed in 1965, the Morriszes worked in Taiwan until 1968 when they transferred to Singapore. He is a general evangelist and she is involved in home and church work.

Marilyn is survived by her parents and two older brothers, Bruce and Gerry, both in the United States. Burial will be in Singapore.

Grace Memorial Church, Tupelo, has elected four new deacons: Talmadge Smith, Gene Hughes, Euel Bryant, and James Smith. Eleven have been baptized into the church fellowship since the new church year began, and two more are awaiting baptism. Joe Holcomb is pastor.

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—Herbert C. Gabhart, 68, is resigning as president of Belmont College, effective June 1, 1982, and will accept a newly created post of chancellor.



MRS. KATE STEWART, a member of the East McComb Baptist Church for 51 years, demonstrated her love and concern for the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering into a personal way. She spent a large part of this year piecing a quilt which she recently sold to a family in Mobile, Ala. for \$275.00. She gave the check to the church for missions.

John O. McMullen, a former Mississippi pastor, recently celebrated his fifth anniversary as pastor of First Southern Baptist Church, Black Rock, Ark. The church at Black Rock gave him a cake, plus money to buy new carpet for the parsonage.

He who seeks to get without giving is a gambler no matter what his business is.

## Staff Changes

First Baptist Church, Shannon, has called Robert Armstrong, a native of Hazlehurst, as pastor. He is married to the former Violet Harris of Hazlehurst. They have two children, James (Jim), 16, and Tammy, 11.

Armstrong moved from Macedonia, Church, Lee County. The Shannon church surprised the Armstrongs with an old-fashioned pounding Nov. 29. All the members were invited to open house at the parsonage Dec. 12.



Armstrong



## New Orleans doctorates

Landrum P. Leavell, president of New Orleans Seminary (left) meets Mississippi doctoral graduates (left to right) Terry L. Crimm, Dennis Lee Johnsey, and John Ervin Thames prior to the December 19, graduation exercises at the seminary. This group joined over 110 other persons in receiving diplomas at the mid-year exercise at the seminary.



## DOM officers

New officers in the Mississippi Conference of Directors of Missions are from left: J. W. Brister, Hinds-Madison, pianist; Neil Moore, Prentiss, vice president; Holmes Carlisle, Scott, secretary-treasurer; Allen Webb, Jackson County, president; and J. C. Renfro, Rankin, songleader.



## Singing Churchmen officers

New officers for the Mississippi Singing Churchmen are (from left): J. M. Wood, central area director; Agnes Batson, treasurer; Farley Earnest, president-elect; Lester Mason, north area director; Bill Bacon, secretary; Jim Watson, south area director; E. Gary Anglin, president (seated); Louis Nicolosi, instrumental director; C. Truitt Roberts, handbell director; Perry Robinson, missions director; and Bill Sellers, publicity director.

## BWA president names program chairman, '85

WASHINGTON—Duke K. McCall, president of the Baptist World Alliance, appointed Porter Routh, past executive secretary of the Southern Baptist Convention, to serve as the program chairman of the BWA World Congress to be held in Los Angeles, CA, USA, July 1-7, 1985. The appointment was made during the meetings of the BWA Executive Committee held in Washington, D.C., November 23-24.

The Executive Committee and the entire BWA staff heard an evaluation report of the 1980 World Congress, given by David S. Simmonds, chairman of the Committee on Local Arrangements of that Congress in Toronto.

A local arrangements committee for the upcoming congress in Los Angeles is already at work to guarantee successful meetings for the expected 20,000 delegates and visitors.

## Trustees elect Executive Committee

The Board of Trustees of the Mississippi Baptist Seminary recently met at the Seminary, located in Jackson. Carl Savell, new board chairman, introduced five of the six new board members: H. L. Buckley, Wayne Burkes, James Byrd, L. C. Cook, and Jerry Young. (Jesse Jackson, also a new board member, was unable to attend.)

Included in the business meeting was the election of a seven-person Executive Committee. Elected to serve as officers were: Carl Savell, chairman; Robert Jones, vice-chairman; H. L. Buckley, treasurer; and William Smith, III, secretary. Also elected to serve were: Mrs. Harold (Jo) Hollman, W. T. Guice, and William P. Davis, ex officio.

Board members heard reports on plans for the 40th year anniversary celebration for the Seminary, academic program changes, extension centers and administration. Also discussed were the new accounting system for the Mississippi Baptist Seminary and adoption of the 1982 Mississippi Baptist Seminary budget.

Mill Valley, Calif.—Forty nine students from 17 states and six foreign countries were graduated from Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary during the institution's annual mid-term commencement December 11. W. Morgan Patterson, dean of academic affairs at Golden Gate, delivered the graduation address.

## THE VILLAGE VIEW

FROM  
Baptist Children's Village  
P. O. Box 11308 Jackson, MS 39213

## Village Trustees convene

On December 1, The Village's Board of Trustees convened in its final regular, quarterly session of 1981 in the board room on The India Nunnery Campus near Jackson. In addition to receiving and considering quarterly reports from the administration and transacting a number of items of Village business, the Board reorganized itself through the election of officers for 1982 and through committee appointments.

In accord with custom, and in the interest of an orderly transfer of responsibility, the meeting was attended by trustees temporarily retiring from active Board service under convention policy, as well as by trustees newly-elected at the 1981 session of Mississippi Baptist Convention.

The meeting adjourned with a traditional Christmas luncheon, hosted by Executive Director Nunnery and Mrs. Nunnery which was attended both by the trustees present and their wives, as guests of the administration.

During the business meeting, Executive Director Nunnery presented attractive lapel pins, commemorating years of Village service, to 17 different Trustees, including: for 34 years—Lyle V. Corey of Meridian; for 33 years—Ralph H. Hester, Sr. of Jackson; for 32 years—Rev. M. G. Reedy of Water Valley; for 22 years—W. C. Cathay of Jackson; for 22 years—A. L. Rainey, Jr. of Gulfport; for 21 years—Charles L. Miller of Jackson; for 21 years—T. Cooper Walton of Jackson; for 19 years—W. F. Evans of Meridian; for 15 years—W. Kelly Pyron of Natchez; for 14 years—Fred L. Gaddis of Forest; for 13 years—Robert W. King of Jackson; for 7 years—Dr. Kermit D. McGregor of Clinton; for 6 years—Rev. Doyle Cummings of Itta Bena; for 5 years—James T. Hollingsworth of Hollandale; for 4 years—Dr. Dwight L. Hastings of Laurel; for 2 years—Charles T. Hull of Winona and for 1 year—E. R. "Jake" Bond of Long Beach. The gold pins are embossed with the Village logo, encircled by the name of the agency and the appropriate number of years of service.

One of the more interesting facets of the presentation noted was the service of Messrs. Corey and Hester and Rev. Reedy, whose combined years of affiliation with and service to The Baptist Children's Village aggregated 99 years.

Rev. James L. Spencer, Pastor, First Baptist Church, Morton; Rev. Ronny E. Robinson, Pastor, Mt. Moriah Baptist Church, Bogie Chitto; Rev. John Wayne Edwards, Pastor, Eudora Baptist Church, Hernando; Rev. Doyle Cummings, Pastor, First Baptist Church, Itta Bena; Dr. Kermit D. McGregor, Pastor, Morrison Heights Baptist Church, Clinton; and Mr. Charles Walker, an attorney of Oxford were each welcomed as newly-elected members of the Board. Both Dr. McGregor and Rev. Cummings have previously actively served as Trustees of The Village. Rev. Reedy and Messrs. Hollingsworth, King, Walton, Rainey and Cathay assumed, temporarily, inactive status under the Convention's rotating policy.

At the close of the business meeting, over which retiring President Robert W. King of Jackson presided, the Board of Trustees elected Mr. Lyle V. Corey, a Meridian Attorney as its President; Mr. Charles T. Hull, a Winona business man as its Vice President and Chairman of its Executive Committee; and Dr. Dwight L. Hastings, a Laurel dentist, as its Secretary.

The Baptist Children's Village, as an official agency of Mississippi Baptist Convention is served by a 15-member Board of Trustees, each elected to a 3-year term by annual sessions of Mississippi Baptist Convention. Each Trustee may serve two consecutive terms before commencing a mandatory period of retirement which must extend for at least one year.

Trustees of The Children's Village serve without compensation, attending regular meetings of the full membership of the Board on a quarterly basis.

## Presenting our trustees



M.G. Reedy Water Valley President Lyle V. Corey, Meridian

## Christmas ... 1981

Thanks to the loyal interest, compassion and generosity of Mississippi Baptists and individual friends of children, the Christmas season of 1981 again constituted a happy and rewarding experience for the boys and girls who must make their homes with us.

Every Village young person received a number of useful and valuable gifts through the thoughtfulness of our friends, and although returns to the Village's annual HOLIDAY FUND appeal are not complete, receipts to that Fund at the close of December business were gratifying and encouraging.

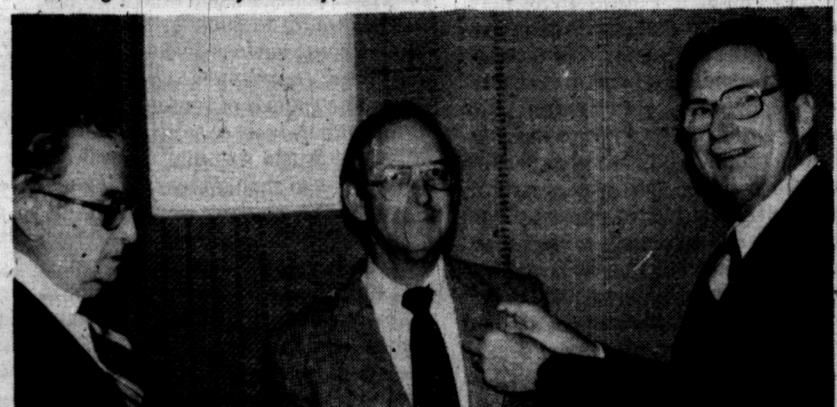
Individuals who intended to post a seasonal gift to our HOLIDAY FUND, and neglected to do so, are urged to dispatch the gift to us in January, since the proceeds of that Fund are heavily relied upon in underwriting our food and milk needs throughout the year ahead.

In accord with tradition, Village boys and girls at every location enjoyed a brief holiday visit during the Christmas season into private homes of approved relatives and friends.

Thank you Mississippi Baptists for again helping us interpret the love of God to neglected boys and girls at Christmas in a context which all of them can and do understand!



Incoming President Lyle Corey, Meridian, is congratulated by Robert W. King.



Executive Director Paul Nunnery presents 13-year service pin to retiring Trustee President Robert W. King of Jackson.

## Christmas smiles tell it all



## For Your Information

Serving as the childcare agency of The Mississippi Baptist Convention, we seek to be a ministry of the local Baptist churches and its members. In order to better serve you, it would be of great help if you would advise us of any questions or requests that you have by completing the accompanying form and returning same to the address as indicated.

NAME

ADDRESS

PLEASE SEND ME INFORMATION REGARDING THE FOLLOWING:

- ☐ THE VILLAGE — ITS MISSION AND MEANS
- ☐ FAMILY SERVICES/MINISTRIES AVAILABLE
- ☐ SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES
- ☐ ALTERNATIVE GIVING (MEMORIALS, GIFTS OF HONOR, BEQUESTS)
- ☐ VILLAGE NEEDS
- ☐ CURRENT ANNUAL REPORT
- ☐ OTHER

MAIL TO: The Baptist Children's Village  
Box 11308  
Jackson, Mississippi 39213



## Bible Book Series



### The disciples' crisis of awareness

By Howard E. Spell  
Dean Emeritus  
Mississippi College  
Matthew 16:13-17:27

**I. Simon Peter's Confession, 16:13-20**  
It was near the end of that period of special training of the twelve that Jesus asked them about public opinion concerning him. Their answers are well known to those familiar with the gospel record. Then Jesus asked them about their own opinion. Did they think of him as one who would set up an earthly kingdom and rule as a king over the Jewish nation? Simon Peter seemingly did not hesitate to declare his conviction in saying: "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God" (16:16 NASV). This recognition and confession had not come to Simon Peter by way of logic or the opinion of others but by revelation from God himself.

Many interpretations have been suggested concerning what Jesus meant when he said, "And I also say unto you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of Hades shall not overpower it" (16:18 NASV). Space does not permit a discussion of the various theories. The word "Peter" means "rock" and if one were to substitute English letters for the Greek characters, he would have "petros." But when Jesus said, "upon this rock," he used the word "petra." Although many would argue against putting too much emphasis on the distinction between the two words (since Jesus was probably speaking Aramaic and that language does not have such distinction for rock), it does seem evident that Jesus was not speaking of building his church on one individual. Through a revelation which came to him from God, Simon Peter had confessed Jesus as the promised Messiah, and Jesus seems to be saying that out of people down through the ages who made a like confession based on God's revelation he will build his church. Simon Peter was one rock or stone to be laid upon the foundation. Later Peter would write in one of his letters: "... You also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood." (1 Peter 1:5 NASV). This body of believers is to be such that even death itself cannot overpower it. Death can dissolve earthly relationships, but it does not overcome the church of the Living God.

We should also remember that the administration of this body, the church, is to be entrusted to the believers—not just to Simon Peter. He was only one of the believers. But this administration is to be carried out in keeping with the principles which have already been established in heaven. A more literal translation of what Jesus said would be, "Whatsoever you shall bind on earth shall have been bound in heaven." So also with the "loosing." This is said because the tense Jesus used is the periphrastic future perfect, passive voice and not the simple future, active voice as an examination of the Greek New Testament will show.

**II. A Change in Emphasis, 16:21-28**  
When Jesus charged the disciple to tell no one that he was the Christ, it was not because of a change in his role, but because he knew he needed more time to spend with the disciples in preparing them for the end. Too much publicity at this particular time could hinder him.

From this point on in his ministry Jesus put increasing emphasis on himself and his role in the world. Prior to this time, he had said many things about the kingdom—now he will talk more about the King and about his mission. The disciples needed to understand that he must die; it is interesting to note that when Peter expressed a contrary view Jesus rebuked him. It is quite often that one's friends are his greatest temptation.

Jesus never led people to think that the Christian way of life was an easy one. Thus he could talk to his disciples about self-denial and about the folly of gaining the whole world but losing one's life. It would seem only natural to have Jesus referring to the Second Coming of Christ in verse 28, but this can hardly be the case. Matthew would record later that Jesus said: "But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone" (24:36 NASV). Various interpretations have been suggested. Did not Christ mean that his crucifixion and resurrection would be the coming of his kingdom—the ushering in of a new age?

**III. God's Approval of the Son, 17:1-13.**  
The place of the Transfiguration is relatively unimportant although it was on some mountain in the vicinity of Caesarea-Philippi. What is important is that Moses (representing the law)

and Elijah (representing the prophets) appeared and talked with Jesus about his "departure which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem" (Luke 9:31 NASV). This was probably the only time during his entire ministry that Jesus could talk to any one who could fully understand. It was here that God again gave his approval of the role of the Son (17:5).

**IV. An Awareness of Need of Greater Faith, 17:14-21**

The failure of the disciples to heal the demoniac boy was no doubt embarrassing and humiliating to them, and it caused them to ask Jesus for the reason. The answer was simple and to the point—they lacked faith.

**V. Payment of the Temple Tax, 17:24-27**

Although the Lord of the temple should not have had to pay the temple tax, Jesus preferred paying it so others might not stumble.

#### Devotional

### Useful indeed

By Earl Kelly, executive secretary, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board  
"Oh, I know you have found him useless in the past but he is going to be useful now, to both of us" (Philemon 11—Phillips).

During the early part of each year (February 15) Christians of the Greek Church celebrate the memory of a man who at one time was useless. He had put himself on the scrapheap but something happened to him, and the story is hidden in a tiny epistle of Paul which has been preserved in our New Testament. A keen Christian of the church of Colossae, named Philemon, had a slave he called Onesimus (in Greek, he was called Onesimus: there was a Greek word "Onesim" which meant "profit"; so Onesimus was profitable). He ran away, however, probably helping himself to some of his master's money before he went. Somehow he met Paul in a Roman jail.

No one who talked with Paul for long could have been unmoved. Soon the missionary was sending him back to the master he had wronged, and writing a note to beg the master to take him back no longer as a slave but as a fellow-Christian.

That is the kind of change that could occur and still can even in people who do wrong things and run away in cowardice.

"You found him pretty useless," Paul wrote to Philemon, but "nowadays he is worth something to you and me" (Moffatt). We really do not know what happened when a runaway slave returned to Colossae but Ignatius in one of his letters talks about the Bishop of Ephesus who was called Onesimus. It could have been the same man. Indeed, some of the scholars think that the useless slave had some hand in collecting the letters of Saint Paul together so that we could have them to read. If so, he was pretty useful after all!

No one is "useless" to Jesus. This is the truth the New Testament teaches and all Christian biography proclaims. The "Good News" is all about the way useless people can be made "useful indeed." The mission of our churches in 1982 is to help those whose lives are on the scrap pile to be introduced to Jesus so that we can make them "useful indeed."



Kelly

## Life and Work Lesson



### Contrast in order to communicate

By James L. Travis, III  
Pastoral Services, University  
of Mississippi Medical Center  
Jackson, Miss.  
I Corinthians 2

When we wish to make an exceptionally important point in our conversation, often we will resort to overstatement or sharp contrast which images what seems to be an absolute polarity between two ideas. Last evening, a few hours after we had returned from a holiday trip, my wife emphatically said to me, "I am freezing to death! Could you please start a fire in the fireplace?" After she had been seated in front of the fireplace for about two hours she moved to the other side of the room exclaiming, "Whew! I am burning up!" These were obviously overstatements which also ranged between the extremes of severe cold and intense heat. Much of our life is lived between extremes. That elusive happy medium is difficult, if not usually impossible, to achieve.

This is the case with Paul in the second chapter of his first letter to the Corinthians. He makes an important point in light of the situation in the church at Corinth. In so doing he emphasizes in an extreme fashion one aspect of the gospel. Also he makes several contrasts, e.g., between the wisdom of man and the wisdom of God, between the spiritual man and the unspiritual man.

**2:1-5, The Message and the Method:** Paul refers in the beginning of this second chapter to his visit to Corinth. According to Acts that visit had come directly on the heels of his ministry in Athens. His sermon in Athens, as it is recorded, obviously is an attempt to appeal to the audience on the basis of ideas with which they were familiar. While Paul may not have viewed that experience totally as a failure and while there are some references to the message of the cross, the fact is he emphasized the resurrection of Christ. According to this statement in I Corinthians his ministry of proclamation in Corinth emphasized the cross. Further, he notes that he decided not to resort to the kind of skill and eloquent rhetorical approaches of those whose expertise was designed to sway the minds and behavior of persons. Rather, his desire was that whatever testimony or mystery of God which he shared with others be allowed to rest on its own foundation, namely, the

power of God through the Holy Spirit. There are two important things to note in this passage. First of all, Paul is emphasizing the centrality of the cross in the Christian message. This is not the whole Christian message, but it is the center. It served as the basis around which the Gospel accounts were put together. Today it serves as a most important corrective to those persons who wish to move to the liberation and power of the resurrection experience without passing through the challenge and risk of "cross" living.

I witness this sometimes in my ministry to persons who are faced with a life-threatening illness. It seems so easy for those who have lived within a Christian framework to grasp onto some hope that God will not let them die, or cling to the hope of the resurrection in such a way as to avoid facing the fear and the challenge in dying. I try to help these individuals come to terms with both the cross and the resurrection and realize that the Christian faith does not deny or ignore the agonies of death. Rather, it moves through them to get to the resurrection power.

A second thing to note in this passage is that Paul was not suggesting that the proclamation be reduced to one monotonous theme and be delivered in sloppy fashion. It is true that we have one "old, old story" to share with others about the Gospel. Yet it is important for those who do the proclaiming to utilize the most effective means possible. Now, as Paul points out, the power to save is not in the effective techniques which we use. It is in the manner in which God's Holy Spirit is able to touch the lives of individuals. However, it is important to remember that the way in which the proclamation is couched may determine the kind of hearing that the preacher receives.

**2:6-10a, Two Kinds of Wisdom:** Paul attempts here to balance the one-sided argument that he has just set forth by pointing out that for those Christians who are growing toward maturity it is important to impart wisdom. He had declared in the verse preceding this section that the purpose was for the individual's faith not to rest in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. This "secret and hidden wisdom of God" is not just some esoteric knowledge limited only to the spiritual elite. Rather, it is that way of perceiving re-

ality that sees beyond the surface, the obvious, to the deeper meaning of truth. In fact, Paul points out that had the "rulers of this age understood this" (more than likely the authorities which passed judgment on Jesus) they would have responded much differently to Jesus as he conducted his ministry on earth. They would have perceived him as the "Lord of Glory" rather than a trouble-making ex-carpenter who treated to upset their world.

**2:10b-13, The Spirit as Teacher:** Within the limits of human language, Paul here attempts to explain something of the way in which a deeper vision of reality is possible for the human creature. He uses the analogy that no one has as free access to a person's own thoughts as that person. Paul makes the point that it is through God's Spirit of love and understanding that the riches of God's wisdom are available to persons. What happens is that we are taught by the Spirit to understand and to see more clearly what life is all about. One needs to remember in this context the closing reassurances of Jesus as recorded in the Gospel of John, that he would send the Holy Spirit, the Counselor, who would interpret and clarify the truth that had entered the world. In this passage Paul continues to work with contrast, the Spirit which is from God distinguished from the spirit of the world.

**2:14-16, Living in the Spirit:** All of this comes to the point with which Paul is concerned in his writing to the church at Corinth, that is, the way in which one lives out the wisdom conveyed by the Spirit. Paul is saying here that persons who continue to be closed to the Spirit (the unspiritual person) lives with such tunnel vision that they cannot perceive the "rumors of angels" (Peter Berger), the evidence of God in the world. These are not to be understood as people who are inherently evil or who perform terribly bad acts. It is a commentary on the limitations experienced by those who are not in touch with that dimension of reality which goes beyond what can be seen or heard or touched in the literal sense. There is a note of poignancy in the phrase "not able to understand," because that means that persons shortchange themselves when this stance toward life is maintained.

#### In Korea

## Teams tally 2,982 professions

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—Using a pattern well tested, the Nashville (Tenn.) Baptist Association sent 76 Baptist volunteers to South Korea, Oct. 1-15, to preach, teach, testify and share the gospel.

When statistics were tallied at the end of the effort, 2,982 professions of faith in Jesus Christ had been recorded. Southern Baptist missionaries and Korean Baptist leaders acknowledged the figures probably include some duplication. Some decisions made during personal evangelism efforts during the day may have been counted again during an evening worship service, they explained.

In 1973, World Evangelism Foundation, a Texas-based organization of Southern Baptists who at the time were unrelated to the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board, sponsored a partnership crusade in Korea. Using Southern Baptist pastors and laymen to work with Korean Baptist churches, WEF held such crusades each year for several years until Florida Baptists, working through the Foreign Mission Board, agreed to provide such teams during 1978 and 1979. Louisiana Baptists sponsored teams in 1980.

Early in 1981, the work of WEF was assimilated into the work of the board by mutual agreement of both organizations. The resulting FMB-sponsored partnership evangelism program will plan similar efforts in numerous other nations.

All but 14 of the recent group of volunteers were Tennesseans and most were members of churches within the Nashville Baptist Association. There were three from Louisiana, two from Alabama, and one each from Florida, Kentucky, Mississippi, Missouri and Ohio.

They shared the gospel on airplanes, in hotels, in shops, on the streets, in cemeteries, and even in billiard parlors. Two Koreans prayed to receive Jesus Christ on the plane between Seattle, Wash., and Seoul, Korea. In a Korean market, one team shared the gospel with an American woman and a Korean man at the same time. Both responded and invited Christ into their lives.

The volunteers, who went at their own expense or with support from their churches, worked in 27 teams of two to four people. Each team, including a pastor and one to three laypersons, was paired with one Korean

church for a week and a second church during the second week. During the first week they worked with churches in Pusan, Taejeon and Suwon. The second week they worked with 27 churches in Seoul.

The stories of spiritual decisions are numerous. A follower of Sun Myung Moon was converted. An 84-year-old man received Christ and told his new friends they almost waited too long to come.

A young man, angry and frustrated with his family, was plotting ways to vent his hostility through some act of violence when he passed a Baptist church building. Hearing the singing, he wandered in and found a seat at the back of the sanctuary. He listened to the American preacher preach a message on love and forgiveness and responded to an invitation to receive Christ.

One team member went with a Korean pastor into a nursing home in Pusan where 13 Korean "grandmothers" lived. All 13 were Buddhists. All 13 listened as the Korean pastor shared the gospel. All 13 prayed to receive Christ.

Korean pastors and church leaders will follow up the decisions.

### Old Korean is ready, but "You almost waited too long"

By Charlie Warren

PUSAN, Korea (BP)—Roger Shelton stepped into the dimly lit room and sat on the bare linoleum floor. Following Korea custom, the American pastor bowed his head and prayed silently.

Lifting his head, Shelton, pastor of Haywood Hills Baptist Church, Nashville, Tenn., greeted the man who was already crouched in his usual place on the floor.

"I have come to talk with you about Jesus Christ," Shelton said, pausing for his interpreter to translate.

Through the interpreter, the Korean man responded, "I know, I have been waiting for you for a long time."

Knowing that they previously had scheduled the appointment, the interpreter explained they were not late. They were exactly on time.

"That's not what I meant," the Korean explained. "My people are Buddhist and I have been Buddhist, but Buddha gives me no comfort."

Pointing to a Korean Bible in the opposite corner, the man explained he had gotten it two years ago and had

read it through twice.

"It tells of a great one," the man continued. "I have waited for somebody to come and tell me about him."

He believed if the Bible was true, God would send someone to him. In recent months, however, he had become very ill. A creeping paralysis had claimed both legs and was threatening to take his life unless the doctors treating him could discover a cure.

Shelton, one of 76 Southern Baptists in Korea on an evangelistic project sponsored by the Nashville Baptist Association, presented the gospel to the man, communicating through the interpreter.

"The man readily believed and rejoiced," Shelton said. "He was ready."

As the visitors rose to leave, the man thanked them for coming.

Shelton said the man's final words shook every fiber of his emotional being. "You almost waited too long."

(Warren is associate editor of the Tennessee Baptist and Reflector.)

## Uniform Lesson



### Jesus as servant

By Louie H. Farmer, Jr., Hattiesburg  
Luke 22:24-27; John 13:1-7, 12-15; Phil. 2:5-8

**The mind of Jesus—to serve**

It seems a pity that the disciples could not have read Philipians 2:5-8 before the Last Supper. It might have saved them considerable anxiety, some confusion and a bit of embarrassment.

Our lesson today pictures Jesus in the role of servant. Later Paul wrote to the Philipians, "Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus." The Greek word, *phroneo*, refers to a habit of thought within one. It is variously translated attitude, mind, disposition or spirit. Paul said that Jesus always had the nature of God but took on the nature of a servant.

This is the heart of our lesson today. Jesus is pictured as a servant, and serve he did. However, the important thing is not simply the service but the disposition or mind-set behind the service.

The disciples still did not understand the mind of Christ, even though they had been constantly with him for months. Let us explore what this immaturity in their thinking brought on them.

**The mind of the world—to get ahead**

Jesus had expressed his desire to eat the Passover meal with his disciples before the crucifixion which he knew was near at hand (Luke 22:15). Arrangements for the meal were made according to his instructions.

After the meal Jesus told the disciples that one of them would deliver him to his enemies to be put to death. They questioned among themselves as to who would do such a thing. Then they fell into a serious discussion about who would be greatest among them. There was a spirit of contention which came from the sort of selfish ambition which the world exhibits. They were disputing who should have the highest place in the seating arrangement. There was a strict sort of seating arrangement at such Jewish occasions. It is still observed in the protocol of state occasions at the White House and such places. The host or guest of honor is seated at the head of the table with the one of second highest honor at his right and the one of next importance at his left.

The word for strife seems to indicate

that there was more than a simple discussion of the matter. It manifested an attitude quite unlike that of the Master. Jesus told the disciples that kings of the world order their servants around and yet claim to be the benefactors of the people. Among Christians it is to be different. The one who will be greatest is to be like the youngest. The youngest and the servants were lower than older people or the chief people. Jesus was saying that to be greatest one must have the spirit, the mind, the attitude of the youngest or of a servant. He reminded them that he was among them as a servant.

**Jesus' example—service**

In New Testament times people traveled by foot on the dusty roads of Palestine. When guests went into a house, it was common courtesy for the host to have a servant wash the dusty, tired feet of the traveler. This was a task that was left to a servant and was beneath the dignity of the host. He would be ashamed to get his hands dirty in such a way.

The disciples had made arrangements for the meal, but when they had come into the room they had been thinking of other things, such as who should have the best place, and they had forgotten this customary courtesy. It may be that they did not feel the responsibility of a host, and it certainly was that they were of no disposition to take the place of a servant.

After the supper and after Judas had left the room, Jesus rebuked the disciples for their lack of humility—not by words but by action. He took off his outer garment, took a basin of water and proceeded to wash the feet of those at the table. This was work of a servant being performed by the Master. At first the disciples were amazed and speechless as he went from one to the other.

Some have speculated that Peter was farthest from Jesus at the table. At least Jesus seems to have come to him last. Peter, who was seldom speechless, said, "You will never wash my feet." Jesus explained that Peter did not understand and that it was necessary for him to wash Peter's feet. Characteristically, Peter wanted to go all out and suggested that Jesus wash his hands and his head. Jesus replied that washing his feet was all that was necessary. That would accomplish

Jesus' purpose of serving the members of the group.

Jesus had shown that he was not ashamed to be a servant. He said he had given the disciples an example and that they should wash one another's feet. We do not find this being practiced by Christians, generally, down through the centuries. Therefore, we assume that the command he gave was not for the specific act but for the attitude it involves. Surely Jesus had taken the form of a servant. It was not the act of washing feet or the specific service rendered that was important but the fact that he was of the disposition to serve where service was needed. He was not ashamed to get his hands dirty!

The point of the entire lesson is that conceit, unnecessary clinging to dignity, selfish ambition, or looking down on fellow men is not the way of becoming the greatest Christian. Jesus had said in the Sermon on the Mount, "Blessed are the meek; for they shall inherit the earth" (Matthew 5:5). In Philipians 2:5 Paul wrote "Let this mind (that of meekness, of being a servant) be in you which was also in Christ Jesus."

**Application—the disposition to serve**

Several years ago, while I was a Baptist Student Union director, a young graduate student came into our BSU. She expressed an interest in doing some sort of service. When we were without a janitor she asked for the job. It seemed a bit out of character for a doctoral student, who had taught several years in high school in another state, to be dusting, sweeping and picking up cola bottles thoughtlessly left by freshmen. We found that she had "this mind . . . which was also in Christ Jesus." She was not afraid to get her hands dirty! Later she became associate BSU director. On the very day this is being written she has been appointed as a foreign missionary by the Foreign Mission Board of the Southern Baptist Convention. She has demonstrated that she is a willing servant. On a mission field, whatever the conditions or whatever is needed, she will be a servant. In this she will follow Jesus who was of the mind to be a servant among his disciples.

This mind of being a servant is not just for those special people who are called to serve as missionaries, but for every individual Christian.